

110 • THE POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

665 social and moral life of the community. It is prophesied that morality and family
208 life as it is now known could be destroyed if opposition parties ever came to
[186] power. Finally, it is always pointed out that opposition parties represent the South-
ern Nigerians and that a vote for such a group is a vote against Islam, the true reli-
gion, and a vote for paganism covered by a thin cloak of Christianity.

665 During the 1950s when there was an active local opposition party in Bornu
195 under a Kanuri leader, attitudes to the opposition were more clearly seen. The Brit-
578 ish colonial officials dealt mostly with senior Kanuri members of the Native Au-
648 thority. Both the British and these Kanuri leaders had an abhorrence of disorder,
[523] riots, or activities that could lead to such disturbances. It was thought that allowing
Southern Nigerians to organize branches of their own party locally was one thing
• [579] but having a Kanuri opposition party was quite another. Events proved them cor-
rect, for in 1958 riots broke out in Maiduguri between supporters of the N.P.C.
and the Bornu Youth League. The ins and outs of these riots need not concern us
[167] here, but from that time on the B.Y.L. was crushed. Many of its local leaders fled
to other parts of Nigeria or to neighboring Chad to reappear several years later and
eventually to become loyal N.P.C. supporters. Today although other Nigerian par-
ties are represented in Bornu, their supporters and local organizers are all non-
Kanuri. Thus the emirate government is linked to Nigerian party politics through a
one-party organization which represents the traditional authority system of the emi-
rate.

665 The party and its place as a dominant element in Nigerian politics means
648 that Kanuri leaders have open to them regional and federal appointments. There
are Kanuri in the federal cabinet and in the various federal ministries. Up until
January 1966, the political head of the N.P.C. and the Premier of the northern re-
gion was the Sarduna of Sokoto, and the Governor was Sir Kashim Ibrahim, the
former Waziri of Bornu.¹ The old nineteenth century balance of power in this re-
gion between the empires of Bornu and Sokoto still remain, then, and both must be
represented in the leading positions of this, the largest region of Nigeria.

642 In summary, Kanuri political organization is basically structured along the
105 lines set up by the colonial era which were built onto those of pre-colonial times.
198 As the emirate has developed a need for more modern political structures these
have appeared and are continuing to appear as the society changes towards more
modernization and the accumulation of social and economic development. Within
this structure modes of behavior are still largely traditional as are the values and
political ideology that give the present system its immediate and long range goals.
Whether or not modernism and its values will eventually produce a clash with tra-
dition or whether the change will continue to be as smooth and incremental as it
has in the past is one of the key questions for the future.

¹ As this is being written the politics of Nigeria, and in all probability its constitutional make-
up, are being changed by the effects of the military take-over of the federal government which
occurred in January, 1966.